Direct & Indirect Speech

Rules and Practice Sheet (Grade 6 Cambridge)

Part 1:

What is Direct Speech?

Direct speech uses the exact words spoken by a person. The spoken words are placed inside quotation marks (" ").

Example: Sara said, "I am going to the library."

What is Indirect Speech (Reported Speech)?

Indirect speech reports what someone said without using their exact words. We remove the quotation marks and often change the tense and pronouns.

Example: Sara said that she was going to the library.

Rules to Remember:

Rule 1: Quotation Marks

· Direct: Use quotation marks around the exact words.
· **Indirect: Remove the quotation marks and add "that".**

Direct Indirect
Ali said, **"**I like mangoes.**"**
Ali said **that** he liked mangoes.

Rule 2: Tense Change (Backshift)

When the reporting verb is in the past tense (said, told), the tense inside the speech usually moves one step back.

Direct Speech	**Indirect Speech**
Present simple →	Past simple
Present continuous →	Past continuous
Present perfect →	Past perfect

Past simple →	Past perfect
Past Continuous →	Past perfect Continuous
will →	would
can →	could
may →	might

Examples:

· "I **play** football." → He said that he **played** football.
· "I **am reading**." → She said that she **was reading**.
· "I **have finished**." → He said that he **had finished**.
· "I **will** come." → She said that she **would** come.

Rule 3: Pronoun Change

Pronouns change to match the person reporting the speech.

Direct	**Indirect**
"**I** am tired," said **Tom**.	**Tom** said that **he** was tired.
"**We** are ready," they **said**.	**They** said that **they** were ready.
"**You** are late," **she** told me.	**She** told me that **I** was late.

Rule 4: Time and Place Words Change

Direct	**Indirect**
now	then
today	that day
tomorrow	the next day
yesterday	the day before
here	there
this	that
these	those

Rule 5: Reporting Verbs

· **said** → used when there is no listener mentioned.
· **told** → used when there is a listener (told someone).

She said that she was happy. ✅
She told me that she was happy. ✅
She said me that she was happy. ❌

Rule 6: Questions in Indirect Speech

· Yes/No questions → use if or whether.
· Wh-questions → keep the question word, but use statement word order (no question mark).

Direct: He asked, "Are you coming?"
Indirect: He asked if I was coming.

Direct: She asked, "Where do you live?"
Indirect: She asked where I lived.

Rule 7: Commands and Requests

· Use told (command) or asked (request) **+ to + verb**.
· Negative → **not to + verb.**

Direct: "Close the door," said the teacher.
Indirect: The teacher told us to close the door.

Direct: "Please help me," she said.
Indirect: She asked me to help her.

Part 2: Guided Practice

Instructions: Complete each item by following the hint in brackets.

1. Ravi said, "I am hungry."
   (Change pronoun and tense)
   Ravi said that _____ _____ hungry.

2. "We will visit the museum tomorrow," said the girls.
   (Change tense and time word)
   The girls said that they _____ visit the museum _____ _____.

3. Mother said, "Clean your room."
   (Use told + to + verb)
   Mother told me _____ _____ my room.

4. "Do you like ice cream?" asked Ben.
   (Use if + statement order)
   Ben asked _____ I _____ ice cream.

5. "Where is the station?" the tourist asked.
   (Keep question word, change word order)
   The tourist asked _____ the station _____.

6. "I have lost my keys," said Aisha.
   (Present perfect → past perfect)
   Aisha said that she _____ _____ her keys.

7. "Please sit down," said the teacher.
   (Request: asked + to)
   The teacher asked us _____ _____ down.

8. "I can swim very well," said Omar.
   (can → could)
   Omar said that he _____ _____ very well.

Part 3: Independent Practice

Section A: Change from Direct to Indirect Speech (8 marks)

1. "I am writing a letter," said Fatima.
   ---
2. "We played cricket yesterday," said the boys.
   ---
3. "She will come tomorrow," said Mr. Khan.
   ---
4. "I have seen this film," said Zara.
   ---
5. "You must work hard," the coach told us.
   ---
6. "Are you feeling well?" asked the doctor.
   ---
7. "Please open the window," said my sister.
   ---

8. "Where did you buy this book?" Ali asked me.

Section B: Change from Indirect to Direct Speech (4 marks)

9. He said that he was very busy that day.
---
10. She asked me if I could help her.
---
11. The teacher told us not to talk in class.
---
12. They said that they would arrive the next day.

Section C: Choose the Correct Option (4 marks)

13. She said that she _____ tired.
a) is b) was c) were
14. He asked me _____ I liked football.
a) that b) if c) what
15. "I _____ finish the work," he said. → He said that he would finish the work.
a) will b) can c) am
16. Mother told me _____ make noise.
a) to not b) not to c) don't

Section D: Correct the Errors (4 marks)

17. She said me that she was happy.
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18. He asked where was I going.
---
19. "I am fine," said she that she was fine.
---
20. The teacher told to close the door.

Guided Practice Answer Key (for Parents):

1. he was
2. would, the next day
3. to clean
4. if, liked
5. where, was
6. had lost
7. to sit
8. could swim

Answer Key (For Parent)

Section A:

1. Fatima said that she was writing a letter.
2. The boys said that they had played cricket the day before.
3. Mr. Khan said that she would come the next day.
4. Zara said that she had seen that film.
5. The coach told us that we must/had to work hard.
6. The doctor asked if I was feeling well.
7. My sister asked me to open the window.
8. Ali asked me where I had bought that book.

Section B:

9. He said, "I am very busy today."
10. She said to me, "Can you help me?"
11. The teacher said to us, "Do not talk in class."
12. They said, "We will arrive tomorrow."

Section C:

13. b) was
14. b) if
15. a) will
16. b) not to

Section D:

17. She told me that she was happy.
18. He asked where I was going.
19. "I am fine," she said.
20. The teacher told us/me to close the door.